

Psychological Diversities of Behavior: Validation of Workplace Incivility Scale (WIS) In Context of Education Among Indian University Teachers

Dr. Nimisha Beri ¹, Suneel L. Keswani ²

¹ Professor, School of Education, Lovely Professional University, Phagwara (Punjab), India. Email: nimisha.16084@lpu.co.in, orcid id: <https://orcid.org/0000-0003-0242-087X>

² Research Scholar, School of Education, Lovely Professional University, Phagwara (Punjab), India. Email: suneel.keswani@gmail.com

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Abstract

Purpose: The aim of this study is to standardise the scale of Workplace Incivility in the Indian context among university teachers.

Theoretical Framework: Modern day workplace in corporate or educational institutions is an epitome of excellence but simultaneously the employees and teachers have been inundated with emotional and physical challenges never experienced before. Workplace incivility is one of them, this has been defined as micro aggressions, abuses, office politics, acts of jealousy done among internal stakeholders comprising of peers and seniors which severely affects the workplace happiness and ultimately the productivity of the employees.

Methodology: WIS Scale developed by Cortina (2001) was adopted as a primary data collection tool to access the level of WIS prevailing among Indian university teachers. CFA was applied to access the validity and reliability of the scale used in the Indian context. Based on a sample of 400 university teachers' respondents comprising of Professors, Associate Professors and Assistant Professors in the designate universities a model fit in the Indian context was developed to validate the multidimensional scale of 12 items of WIS.

Findings: The systematic validated scale (instrument) after careful EFA & CFA analysis done by the researchers can now be objectively be used in assessing workplace incivility among working professionals, university teachers in Indian Context

Implications: This can significantly add value in better understanding a contemporary issue of workplace incivility impacting the quality of teaching and other outcomes in educational institutions and accordingly develop interventions to resolve it.

Keywords: University teachers, WIS Scale, workplace incivility, workplace happiness.

INTRODUCTION

Workplace incivility is a contemporary topic of organizational behavior studies. It has a long past but a short history. Concept of "civility" evokes the ideas of civilization, citizenship, and order. The civilized people fit well in the eco system of the modern society and its expectations while the uncivilized represent a violent and a mentally disturbed society. Not all human relationships are always characterised by harmony, peaceful co-existence, collaboration and joint progress. Consequently, the manifestation of incivility among people within the workplace and among all its stakeholders is more common than an exception. Micro aggressions or workplace incivility has been there in the industry and educational institutions since decades getting its impetus from one of the basic desires of humans in power to exercise control on others and impose their own superior status thereby creating unequal within the scope of equals. Sometimes also referred to as social stratification not only limited to gender, race, caste or ethnicity but the spiral of this negativity at some point of time has spared none at the workplace across all levels. Thereby proving to be a silent killer to the productivity and overall happiness of the employees. Not to underestimate the huge monetary cost estimated of experiencing incivility per employee yearly, owing to project and work delays and mental distractions from work (Pearson & Porath, 2009). It was only after the seminal work of Andersson and Pearson (1999) defined it as "low intensity deviant behavior with ambiguous intent to harm the target, in violation of workplace norms of mutual respect" that this subject matter has evoked

awareness and now a concern to minimize workplace incivility and maximize workplace happiness. As the workplace becomes faster-paced, technologically savvy, and culturally diverse including cross culture, civility matters. One of the significant reasons why people work apart from the salary drawn is their need to be respected as a team member and recognised for their quality contribution in the overall output or performance of the organisation. But once that stands to be challenged then human dignity is at peril. Incivility at workplace is usually characterised by discourteous and rude behaviour, verbal abuses in open office space, ignoring the views of the person, unwarranted job and location transfers, deliberate extra work load, threatening facial expressions, verbal threats, backbiting, spreading false rumours, making advances of physical intimacy, blaming, mobbing or even hurting the privacy of the other person can be among many ways of workplace incivility by the seniors or even peers. Weitz & Vardi (2007) states organizational misbehaviour or deviance at individual & collective is vastly prevalent within the organizations and undermining its productivity. To ensure fair & just workplace environment organizational misbehaviour intervention needs to be fair, transparent & needs to be constantly assessed for efficiency and effectiveness. Hutton (2006) articulates workplace incivility early diagnosis of a toxic work environment and intervention can be very helpful to mitigate organizational cost. It's a litmus test to keep work environment in order of its norms before any situation aggravates for the worst.

BACKGROUND

Violence means faith not understood, likewise workplace incivility means human dignity not well understood. Workplace incivility is a ubiquitous problem which has a widespread prevalence in the industry and academic institutions taking the shape of intimidation, rudeness, disrespect or insensitive behavior which may be verbal / non-verbal that is directed at peers or subordinates. Notwithstanding the prevalence and impact of workplace incivility, there are no validated measures of incivility that are particularly designed for use in academic institutions. This makes accurate assessment of its incidence and ramification among university teachers difficult and accordingly its effective interventions. Validated scale offers an opportunity for the development of evidence-based interventions to address workplace incivility in wide spectrum of educational institutions across different culture and regions.

OBJECTIVES OF THE STUDY

To examine reliability, factors, and validity of scale of workplace incivility.

LITERATURE REVIEW

All humans are distinctively unique and enjoy multiple characteristics. All are worthy of respect if not equal by the other fellow human beings. But this can be a utopian concept of perfection in the society which does not exist and is a stark contrast to the prevailing reality. Society today gives more importance to success and popularity than the values or virtues. In people we usually more witness the negative emotions of jealousy, greed, anger, inadequacy, frustration, hate, rage, disgust, bitter, dislike, envy, rudeness, unhappiness among others than the positive emotions. These negative emotions take the shape of human vices, incivility is one them. Caza & Cortina (2007) explained Incivility, as a low-intensity deviant behaviour which is more prevalent and damaging to an individual's well-being and is widespread in the workplace. These daily occurring acts of incivilities or micro aggressions can accrue to have a deep negative effect on individual well-being. The study conducted among university students drawn from North- Western United States concluded incivility may be understated but its impacts are not.

Blasé & Fengning (2008) have expressed that studies of workplace mistreatment/abuse have generated in the past a diverse range of verbal, nonverbal, and physical behaviours excluding physical assault that seriously harm victims. Teachers were among the largest group of abused workers. Porath & Erez (2011) explained rudeness is often unintentional, discourteous or impolite or aggressive behaviour or reply. When individuals do not feel respected, they show withdrawal symptoms. This tarnishes the work culture and brand image. King & Piotrowski (2015) stated that in all likelihood bullying of educators by educators is a possibility. Sometimes it goes beyond incivility and is intentional. Estes & Wang (2016) discussed gender differences that female teachers have been more subjected to workplace incivility as compared to male teachers

Sakuri (2021) found that wherever in any institution majority of the employed are men, women are at greater risk to be subject to workplace incivility thereby impacting their work attitude and happiness. Butts & Yuan (2017) stated that at workplace women have been more subjected to incivility within the same gender & from men. Same gender incivility is prominent & arising from jealousy & “queen bee” power play syndrome. Raaj & Anju (2019) explored perceptions of workplace incivility have negative effects on work related outcomes. It was also endorsed by the study of Tepper (2000) where the results confirmed to the consequences of subordinates distress, emotional exhaustion, lower job satisfaction and intent to quit.

Pearson & Porath (2005) found incivility is on the rise globally. This form of workplace deviance or micro aggressions known as workplace incivility may not be a crime but many organizations fail to identify it. Even most heads are not able to handle it. Schilpzand, DePater & Erez (2014) found that workplace incivility has become widespread globally- experienced, witnessed & instigated at all levels. Majority of research indicates incivility originates from supervisors and co-workers. Williams, et al. (2013) found that contempt of its negative costs, incivility is not a occasional happening in institutions. There is a vital need for academic freedom and tolerance to promote a civil environment. Kending (2013) found significant correlation between institutional culture & incivility in institutions of higher learning. Perception may differ in the senior leadership and teachers but dysfunctional internal culture enhances its spiral of negativity. Workplace incivility contributes to prevailing emotional stress and job insecurity among university teachers. We need to enable inclusivity and equality into the systems for rapid gains. Cahyadi, et al. (2021) noted excess spiral of incivility experienced by the teachers leads to reduced “locus of control” referred to as degree of self-belief in controlling events and outcomes in their lives.

WORKPLACE INCIVILITY SCALE

The Workplace Incivility Scale (WIS) is a self-report measure of rude, condescending, and ostracizing experiences on the job. This scale had been developed by Lilia Cortina (2013) having 12-item with one dimension.

METHODOLOGY

To collect primary data the sample design as per the background of the study comprised of 400 faculty members to include Professors, Associate Professors and Assistant Professors who were approached online and to be fair to have views across the levels in proportion to the number of faculties available respectively at all these three designations. Care was taken to not include in sample any respondent in the category of non- teaching staff or Head of Department (HOD) and above level. There were total 7 universities chosen (1 state and 6 private) in Delhi NCT(India) region which were running 5 conventional professional courses, namely Management, Engineering, Pharmacy, Education and Law in a single campus. The respondent teachers were in the age group ranging from 25 – 64 years male / female and they had been working in their last designation in the university for minimum 3 years. A total of 420 responses were obtained but after cleaning of data to exclude inappropriate values and unengaged outliers (Hair et al. 2010) finally 400 responses were used for statistical analysis.

RESULTS

Confirmatory factor analysis (CFA) and exploratory factor analysis (EFA) are two complementary techniques used by researchers for reviewing research data. The sampling adequacy can be assessed by examining the Kaiser-Meyer-Olkin (KMO) (Kaiser 1970) and correlation matrix by Bartlett’s Test of sphericity (Bartlett 1950) which provides a chi- square output that must be significant. It indicates the matrix is not an identity matrix and accordingly it needs to be significant ($p < .05$) for factor analysis to be suitable (Hair, Anderson et al. 1995a; Tabachnick and Fidell 2001). The indices of the model arrived were the Kaiser- Meyer-Olkin (KMO) value was found to be 0.898 (minimum acceptable coefficient values is 0.60; Tabachnick & Fidell, 1996) and the Bartlett’s test of sphericity was significant (Sig = .000, $p < 0.01$). Both of these values suggest adequacy of data for EFA. From that point of view the obtained values fit in the basic hypothesis at a good optimum level therefore factor analysis can be conducted (Kothari & Garg, 2014)

KMO and Bartlett’s Test of Sphericity

KMO and Bartlett's Test

Kaiser-Meyer-Olkin Measure of Sampling Adequacy.		.898
Bartlett's Test of Sphericity	Approx. Chi-Square	1541.037
	df	66
	Sig.	.000

Source: Prepared by the authors (2023).

Total Variance Explained

Total Variance Explained						
Component	Initial Eigenvalues			Extraction Sums of Squared Loadings		
	Total	% of Variance	Cumulative %	Total	% Variance	Cumulative %
1	6.675	55.621	55.621	6.675	55.621	55.621
2	.981	8.177	63.798			
3	.774	6.447	70.244			
4	.714	5.949	76.193			
5	.587	4.893	81.086			
6	.508	4.237	85.323			
7	.442	3.682	89.005			
8	.377	3.146	92.151			
9	.311	2.592	94.743			
10	.290	2.418	97.161			
11	.217	1.808	98.969			
12	.124	1.031	100.000			

Extraction Method: Principal Component Analysis.

Source: Prepared by the authors (2023).

Factor Loadings

Component Matrix^a

	Component
	1
Q11	.795
Q12	.794
Q3	.788
Q7	.783
Q5	.781
Q8	.769
Q4	.764
Q6	.740
Q9	.736
Q10	.731
Q1	.692
Q2	.541

Extraction Method: Principal Component Analysis.

a. 1 components extracted.

Source: Prepared by the authors (2023).

For this study the CFA was applied using SPSS Amos 22 version. The indices of the model as arrived were as follows : chi-square = 276.584

(CMIN/DF = 4.286, Goodness fit index (GFI)= 0.813, Comparative fit index (CFI) = 0.839, Adjusted Goodness of fit index (AGFI) =0.719, Normed fit index (NFI)= 0.816, Root mean square error of approximation (RSMEA) = 0.101 and Root mean square residual = 0.055

CFA Framework – Workplace Incivility

Model Estimate:	Standard Value	Model Value
CMIN DF	Less than 3 = good	4.286
	Less than 5 = Moderate	
GFI	0.75 – 0.99	0.813
AGFI	0.63 – 0.97	0.719
NFI	0.88 - 0.98	0.816
CFI	0.88 - 1.00	0.839
RMSEA	0.05 - 1.13	0.101
RMR	0.01 - 0.14	0.055

Source: Prepared by the authors (2023).

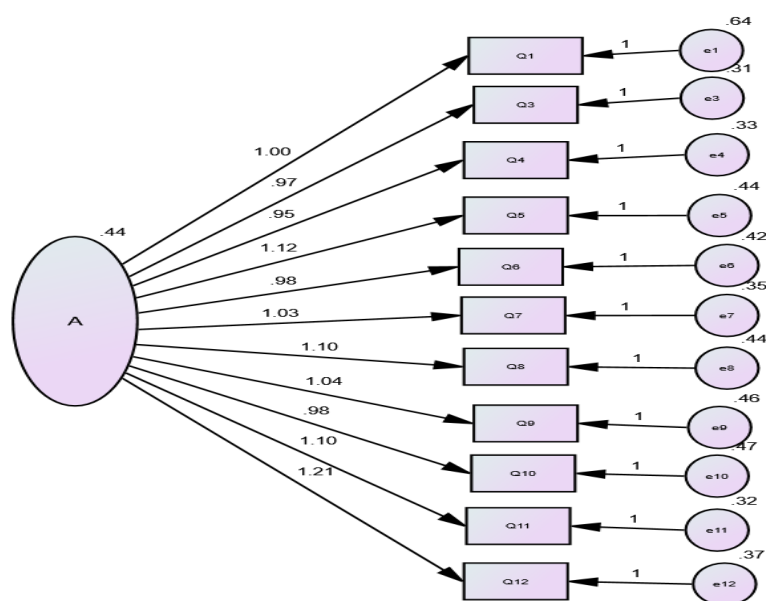


Figure 1 Model of Workplace Incivility Scale

Source: Prepared by the authors (2023).

DISCUSSION

Workplace incivility as a shadow pandemic is a contemporary issue affecting all people at workplace. Incivility manifests into being “one of the most pervasive forms of antisocial behavior in the workplace” (Cortina, 2008, p.56). Thus, its understanding and measurement becomes all the more critical to mitigate its negative spiral. Specially its awareness of impact on the university teachers has been very low which is a big area of concern. The purpose of the present study was to validate the very popular instrument of workplace incivility as originally constructed by L.M. Cortina (2001) to be of immense use in the arena of teachers working at university workplace in India. The systematic validated scale (instrument) after careful EFA & CFA analysis done by the researchers can now be objectively be used in assessing workplace incivility among working professionals, university teachers and it impacts on different attributes of employment like – performance, well -being, job engagement, mental / physical health, psychological stress, anxiety, insecurity, mental exhaustion, conflicts, employee absenteeism, organizational injustice, high employee turnover and happiness.

CONCLUSION

This can be a great insight to the top leadership of the malaise prevailing inside the institution. Thus, accordingly steps can be taken to minimize the deleterious effects of workplace incivility and frame teachers centric human resource policies creating a congenial atmosphere of trust and workplace happiness. The scale with its good convergent and discriminant validity can be used to identify areas where interventions are required to address workplace incivility. These interventions could include focused training programs for the senior leadership and university teachers to sensitize them on this subject and its implications. Scale can be used to compare levels of incivility among non -teaching staff of the university as well. Equally the scale can be effectively be used in other contexts, professions or industries, although there may a need to further revalidate the scale to be culture and region sensitive. The validated workplace incivility scale is no guarantee to any systematic errors or such tendencies in the research design, data analysis or small sample size that could affect the outcomes. Secondly scale being used primarily in quantitative data collection from the respondents relies on self-reported data which

can be subject to bias and in some cases may not accurately reflect the actual experiences of the respondents. Future work can include longitudinal studies to access the stability or objectivity of the validated scale over time to evaluate its reliability over extended periods of time. Further to have more conclusive results and even overcome the limitation of quantitative data collection the researchers can attempt a mixed approach to include qualitative methods of data collection.

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